

Scottish employers going that extra yard to help charities

Caroline MacLeod

EMPLOYERS across Scotland are recognising the health and team-building benefits of supporting staff participation in fundraising events. Corporate support for charity challenges has never been greater, ranging from participation in moonlit walks across Scotland's cities, to long-distance hikes and high altitude climbs as far afield as Tanzania and Peru.

Some of Scotland's largest companies, such as RBS, Scottish & Newcastle and HBOS, have put in place substantial charitable and volunteering programmes.

Edinburgh-based fund management business Martin Currie has an award-winning community investment programme that includes, donations, volunteering and supporting staff fundraising. It has even developed its own event, the Martin Currie Rob Roy Challenge, which raised £750,000 in its first two years.

Starting from the village of Drymen on the West Highland Way, fundraisers of all ages and abilities will venture north east through some of the most beautiful views in the UK to be met by a welcome party

'The route follows tracks used by Scotland's most notorious outlaw'

at the finish line in Kenmore. The route has a strong historic connection, following the tracks and paths used by Rob Roy MacGregor in the 17th and 18th centuries as he lived the life of Scotland's most notorious outlaw.

Charities in Scotland are recognising the attraction of working more closely with the corporate sector. The Prince's



Take a hike: Workers setting off for last year's Martin Currie Rob Roy Challenge

Trust, which has a successful corporate partnerships programme in Scotland, is one of the charities that will benefit from the 2008 Rob Roy Challenge.

Geraldine Gammell, director of The Prince's Trust Scotland, explains: "At a

Sandy Shand, a project manager at HBOS in Edinburgh, took part in the challenge last year and enjoyed the experience so much that he was the first person to sign up in 2008 on behalf of The Prince's Trust. According to Shand, whose team raised £1,200 last year, the event is tough but achievable.

He says: "The Rob Roy Challenge is a wonderful day out amid some spectacular scenery. Although I do a bit of mountain biking in my spare time, with a bit of preparation most reasonably fit people will be able to complete the event. I would encourage anyone to go for it - either with friends, colleagues or as an individual participant."

The third Martin Currie Rob Roy Challenge takes place on Saturday, 21 June. To find out more visit www.robroychallenge.com

time when many traditional sources of income are under threat, companies can provide charities with an important source of funds. But what is equally important is the ability of our corporate partners to harness the talent and commitment of their employees to support The Prince's Trust through volunteering initiatives".

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